



The Common Core \$tate \$tandards

What Parents, Taxpayers, and School Boards Should Know

...that perhaps they aren't being told

What are the Common Core State Standards?

The Common Core State Standards (CCSS) are a set of learning standards in English language arts (ELA) and mathematics. These standards, if adopted by a state, will replace existing state standards in these subject areas.



Who developed the Common Core State Standards? When?

The National Governors Association (NGA) and the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) together formed the Common Core State Standards Initiative (CCSSI) to develop a set of academic standards to be used in common across all states.

In Spring 2009, governors and chief state school officers (state superintendents) of all but two states signed a Common Core Standards Memorandum of Agreement. This committed their states to voluntary participation in a process leading to the development and adoption of the CCSS. In July 2009 the initiative released some names of people involved in developing the standards. Work on the standards did not involve the public, and some interested organizations were shut out of the process. In September, a draft of the College and Career Readiness Standards was released. The first and only public draft of the K-12 Common Core State Standards for ELA and math was released in March 2010. The final K-12 CCSS was released in June 2010.

With support from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, private corporations--including assessment and publishing companies--funded the development of the standards. Do you suppose publishers have anything to gain?

The Common Core State Standards:

May not align with state adopted or recommended textbooks. \$\$\$

May not align with textbooks already adopted, purchased, and in use by local school districts. \$\$\$

Will require extensive expensive professional development. In most states, these costs will be borne by local school districts. \$\$\$

Are not internationally benchmarked.

Have embedded pedagogy or “how to teach” information. That embedded pedagogy coupled with yet to be developed assessments will determine what and how teachers should teach.

Education is simply the soul of a society as it passes from one generation to another.

Gilbert K. Chesterton





The CCSS Mathematics Standards:

Delay development of some key concepts and skills.

Include significant mathematical sophistication written at a level beyond understanding of most parents, students, administrators, decision makers and many teachers.

Lack coherence and clarity to be consistently interpreted by students, parents, teachers, administrators, curriculum developers, textbook developers/publishers, and assessment developers. Will this lead to consistent expectations and equity?

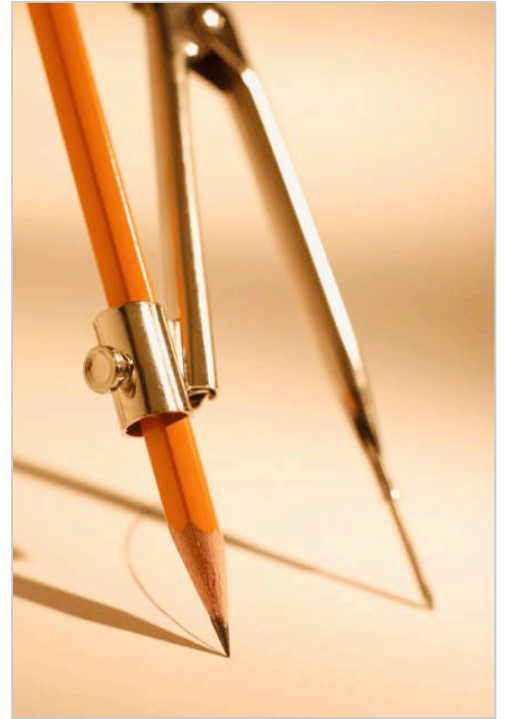
Have standards inappropriately placed, including delayed requirement for standard algorithms, which will hinder student success and waste valuable instructional time.

Treat important topics unevenly. This will result in inefficient use of instructional and practice time.

Are not well organized at the high school level. Some important topics are insufficiently covered. The standards are not divided into defined courses.

Place emphasis on *Standards for Mathematical Practice* which supports a constructivist approach. This approach is typical of “reform” math programs to which many parents across the country object.

Publishers of reform programs are aligning them with the CCSS *Standards for Mathematical Practice*. The CCSS will not necessarily improve the math programs being used in many schools.

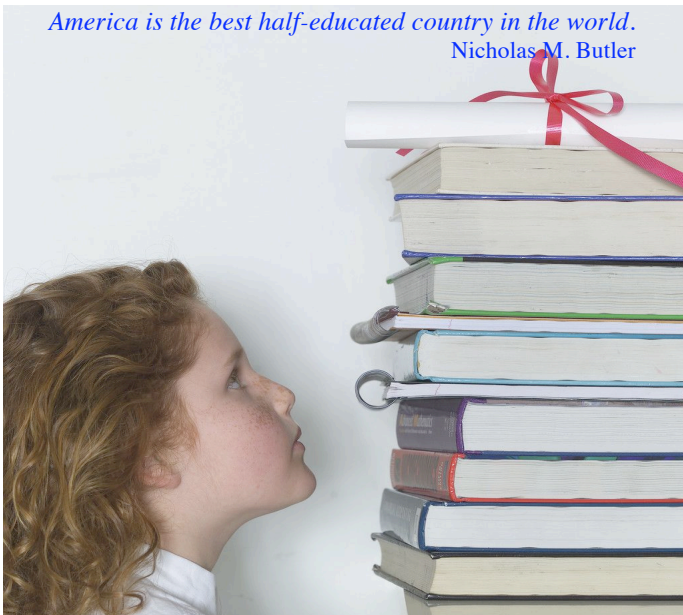


*Anyone can count the seeds in an apple, but
no one can count the apples in a seed.*
Anonymous

It isn't that they can't see the solution. It is that they can't see the problem. Gilbert K. Chesterton

The Standards for English Language Arts and Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects (ELA):

America is the best half-educated country in the world.
Nicholas M. Butler



Use confusing language in some standards.

Are not always clear or measureable on expected student outcomes.

Are not always organized in a logical way and are difficult to follow.

Treat literary elements inconsistently.

Have some writing standards that are general and do not specify what a student should be able to know or do.

Focus on skills over content in reading.

Do not address or require cursive writing.



Will the Adoption of the CCSS be Beneficial or Detrimental for Students, Parents, Taxpayers, and Local School Districts?

Adopting the CCSS takes control of educational content and standards away from parents, taxpayers, local school districts, and states. The CCSS were produced by a closed group and conditionally approved by many states without public review. The NGA and CCSSO, both non-government groups, own the copyright protected CCSS. Control over changes to the CCSS will lie in the hands of so called “experts” outside local school district, state, and the federal government jurisdiction.



Public education is a state responsibility. It is not the responsibility of the federal government. States should not turn over their rights or responsibilities to the direction and influence of non-government organizations or the federal government.



States have had state standards under No Child Left Behind (NCLB) for several years now. There is no evidence from this experience that this allowed students to move from one district to another with minimal interruption of their instructional program. Even with common standards, there will remain wide variances between classrooms, schools, districts, and states. Common standards within states under NCLB did not result in consistency and collaboration among districts within states. Why should we believe the CCSS would bring this about across district and state lines?

Adoption of the CCSS will result in greater turmoil and confusion for teachers and students.

It will result in a loss of learning time and have a negative effect on test results. There will be a delay in students meeting new standards resulting in the possible need for a delay in graduation requirements.

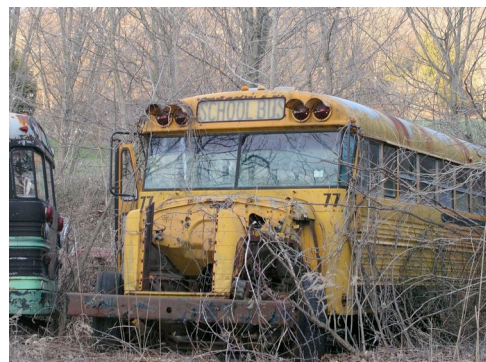


The CCSS represents a massive unevaluated experiment with our students for which they and their parents have been ill informed and have had no opportunity for input.

The CCSS are untested and unevaluated in the classroom. The proposed CCSS should undergo rigorous testing in a limited number of districts before adoption and implementation statewide or nationwide.



Some Validation Committee members would not sign off on the CCSS. Don't you wonder why, especially when these standards have been promoted as being so wonderful?





Will the CCSS be Assessed?

The U.S. Department of Education (USED) has provided over \$350 million in grant funds to two consortia for assessment development. The consortia are the Partnership for the Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) and the SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC). States adopting the CCSS may belong to and use the assessment from one consortium.

Both consortia appear poised to develop subjective assessments rather than objective tests. SBAC plans to assess deep disciplinary understanding and higher-order thinking skills. Will either PARCC or SBAC test student content knowledge and skill?

The assessments will be computer based. The consortia claim this will reduce costs for states. While it may reduce state costs, it will increase costs for local school districts, as they will need to have adequate computer equipment and network capacity throughout the year for students to have frequent access and experience with the computer assessment interface.

Computer assessments may not have the same validity and reliability as paper and pencil tests. It will be several years before results will reflect what the assessment intends, rather than student ability to use the assessment technology.

High achieving students benefit more from computer assessments in terms of performance than low achieving students. This does not sound like it will help close the achievement gap.

Implementation Schedule for CCSS and Assessments

Some states may begin implementing the CCSS as early as the 2011-12 school year. Other states may have a multi-year process to phase in the implementation of the CCSS. In most cases, the CCSS will be implemented by the 2013-2014 school year.



The full administration of the assessments will take place in the 2014-15 school year. Some assessment field tests will begin in the 2012-2013 school year.



Check with your state education agency for your state's implementation timeline.

THE CCSSI LISTS 146 ENDORSING PARTNERS

Here are a few of the Partners

Adobe
 Achieve
 ACT, Inc.
 Alliance for Excellent Education
 America's Choice
 Battelle
 The College Board
 Continental Press, Inc.
 Core4All, LLC
 Dell, Inc.
 Educational Teaching Aids
 Cuisenaire
 Educational Testing Service (ETS)
 Houghton Mifflin Harcourt
 Publishing Company
 Intel Corporation
 Iowa Testing Programs
 Knowledge Alliance
 McGraw-Hill Education
 Microsoft U.S. Partners in Learning
 National Parent Teacher Association
 Pearson
 Renaissance Learning, Inc. (RLI)
 Sadlier
 Scantron Corporation
 Scholastic Inc.
 Texas Instruments Education
 Technology
 Verizon



The Common Core State Standards Adoption and Implementation Costs

Local school districts and states must provide the funds to adopt and implement the CCSS. The federal government is not providing the necessary funds since states voluntarily make the decision as to whether they adopt or not. States receiving Race to the Top (RTTT) funds may use some of those funds to implement the CCSS.



Estimated implementation costs have been exorbitant. The estimated costs for California exceeded the amount the state would have received in RTTT funds. California was not awarded any RTTT funds.

Estimated implementation costs have ranged from \$183 million in Washington State for approximately 1 million students to \$1.6 billion in California for more than 6 million students.



Many states adopting the CCSS are only funding a small portion of the costs at the state level. Local school districts in Washington State will be responsible for 90.6% of the estimated statewide implementation costs.



Many local school districts and state governments are dealing with severe budget shortfalls. How can they justify making an ongoing costly commitment?



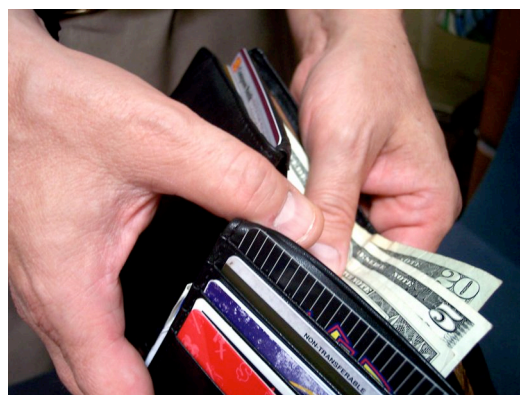
Local school districts will be responsible for the technology equipment, related personnel, and network capacity upgrade costs required for the CCSS assessments.



Is your state making a major commitment on behalf of local school boards without showing or ascertaining that funds are available to meet the fiscal obligation?



Is it fiscally responsible for states to make major financial commitments without first determining if they, and the local school districts, can meet the obligation? Can your state identify dedicated revenues equal to or greater than estimated adoption and implementation expenses?



It is your taxpayer dollar paying the implementation costs whether local, state, or federal money is used. Taxpayers need to guard their wallets and bank accounts. The local school districts and states may find it necessary to raise taxes.



What Can Parents, Taxpayers, and School Boards Do?

Inform yourself and make your voice heard at the local, state, and national level.

Talk to your local teachers about the CCSS. See when they became aware of the initiative and if they feel they had clear opportunities for input as the standards were developed.

Talk to community members. If they are not aware of the CCSS, inform them.

Show others the current state standards and the CCSS side by side for a given grade level. Have them compare and see which they prefer.

Campaign against and vote no on school bond and levy issues.

Attend and speak at school board meetings.

Establish websites and blogs to inform others.

Write opinion pieces and letters to the editor.

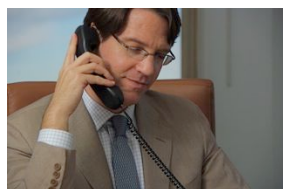
Opt your child out of state testing.

Opt your child out of any testing done on the computer. Request that tests/assessments for your child be paper and pencil.

Conduct community forums and town hall meetings.

Call in to radio talk shows. Host one if possible.

Request local school board and the state education agency to post check registers online so all can easily see and examine expenditures.



Find out how many school administrators, school board members, legislators, and elected officials send their children to private or charter schools.

Keep your child home from school on head count day if your state has such a day that determines funding based on attendance.

Question the constitutionality of RTTT/CCSS and other federal education reform measures at every opportunity.



U.S. Constitution
Amendment 10

20 USC Chapter 48 Sec. 3403



Ask your school board to refuse to implement the CCSS and refuse to submit to the related assessments.

Ask local school board and state officials to show how they expect to pay the estimated cost of implementing the CCSS.





Act at the Local, State, and National Level

Contact state legislators and request legislation to revoke or delay the adoption and implementation of the CCSS.

Contact state legislators and request legislation banning your state from further participation in either assessment consortia.

Ask your state education officials to improve existing state standards if necessary, write new standards, or adopt excellent proven standards with corresponding assessments from Massachusetts, California, or Indiana.

Ask your State Attorney General to examine the legality of the government's position.

Ask your U.S. Congressmen to stop funding Race to the Top and any other federal funding that may support the implementation of the CCSS,

Ask your U.S. Congressmen to not support the reauthorization of ESEA/NCLB.

Act legally and take action you are comfortable with to get your local, state, and national officials to stop the adoption and implementation of the CCSS.



Half a truth is better than no politics. Gilbert K. Chesterton

Education... has produced a vast population able to read but unable to distinguish what is worth reading. G.M. Trevelyan

Help the effort to educate parents, taxpayers, and school districts about the CCSS, CCSS assessments, RTTT, longitudinal data systems (LDS), and ESEA. Please freely and frequently distribute this document to friends, parents, taxpayers, community members, teachers, school administrators, school board members, legislators, newspapers, other media outlets, and any other concerned or interested individuals or groups.

Stop the CCSS Bus



Halt the push for federal and corporate control of our children's public school classrooms.